

bill to preserve the authority of the States over waters within their boundaries, to delegate the authority of the Congress to the States to regulate water, and for other purposes.

Since 1866, Congress has recognized and deferred to the States the authority to allocate and administer water within their borders. The Supreme Court has confirmed that this is an appropriate role for the States. Additionally, in 1952, the Congress passed the McCarran amendment which provides for the adjudication of State and Federal water claims in State water courts.

However, despite both judicial and legislative edicts, I am deeply concerned that the administration, Federal agencies, and some in the Congress are setting the stage for ignoring long established statutory provisions concerning State water rights and State water contracts. The Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, the Federal Land Policy Management Act, and proposed wilderness legislation have all been vehicles used to erode State sovereignty over its water.

It is imperative that States maintain sovereignty over management and control of their water and river systems. All rights to water or reservations of rights for any purposes in States should be subject to the substantive and procedural laws of that State, not the Federal Government. To protect State water rights, I am introducing the State Water Sovereignty Protection Act.

RAY CALHOUN DAY CELEBRATED IN CONGRESS

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, every now and then, you come across an individual who exemplifies the spirit and ethics on which this country was founded. Ray Calhoun from the town of Hoosick, NY, in my congressional district is just such a man in every aspect of his life. I have had the privilege of knowing Ray for better than a quarter of a century now in both public and private life and it is with great pride that I call him friend.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many things I admire about Ray I don't even know where to start so why not with the beginning. Ray was born on Christmas eve 1922 and raised on his father's dairy farm. They were a family farm and supplied local citizens and stores with fresh milk. As was typical at the time, Calhoun's farm became part of the fabric of the local community as the Calhoun's, Ray and his father and brother, became renowned for their service and pride in their work.

Ray remained on that farm for the first 50 years of his life. It was there, rising at the crack of dawn, plowing and tending to the fields, harvesting the crops, and looking after the herd that Ray Calhoun, the man, was shaped.

So it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that we owe a lot to that farm. For it was there that Ray Calhoun developed his tremendous work ethic, his inner pride, and most importantly to those in Hoosick and the surrounding area, his willingness to do more than the norm.

Mr. Speaker, nothing better exemplifies Ray's pride and resolve than the event that

caused him to reluctantly leave the family farm business he so loved. You see, a tragic farming accident cost Ray his leg. Yet, as he recuperated at his home, I paid him a visit along with the current town supervisor, John Murphy. It was there, in the face of so much adversity that Ray decided to serve the community he so loved and run for town supervisor of Hoosick. Little did we know then that his decision would bear a second career of 23 years in public service. Not only did Ray go on to two successful terms as town supervisor, but he served as the town clerk from 1977 until just this past December 31, 1996, when he retired from public service. But those of us who know him know that Ray will still be seen about town, whether it be at church, or at the many civic organizations he also belongs to and has served.

I've always been one to judge people based on what they return to their community. Ray Calhoun has given all he can and then some. But to me Mr. Speaker, he's even more than that. Ever since my mother and I were left by my natural father shortly after I was born, I have always looked to men I admire as a father figure. For me, Ray has always been just such a father image. Someone I more than admire, someone I have tried to model myself after in life.

Mr. Speaker, we all would do ourselves and our communities a great service to model ourselves after Ray Calhoun. At this time, I would ask that you and all Members of the House rise with me and the town of Hoosick, NY, in recognition of a great American on his day, Ray Calhoun Day, to be celebrated this January 12, 1997.

INTRODUCING CROWN JEWEL LEGISLATION

HON. JENNIFER DUNN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure today to introduce the Crown Jewel National Parks Act. This legislation will require the President to submit a specific budget request for our 54 national parks so that for the first time, our national parks would have their own specific and separate line-item to ensure that their funding is a top priority.

We are truly blessed in this Nation with a national park system that is second to none and serves this Nation as one of the top vacation choice of families, individuals and visitors world-wide.

In my State of Washington, we have the good fortune of having three national parks. Mount Rainier National Park, the North Cascades National Park, and the Olympic National Park. Like many of our older national parks, they are suffering from lack of funding creating maintenance and construction backlogs that continue to build up year after year. Also, the popularity of our parks has increased dramatically over the last decade and funding for roads and trails has not kept pace.

While we significantly increased funding for the National Park Service in the 104th Congress, we must not allow money from one park account to be haphazardly moved to another without any constraints. Our national parks are too important to be left to the discretion of bureaucrats.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues in the 105th Congress to enact this legislation.

CREATION OF A "RETIREE VISA"

HON. BILL MCCOLLUM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing legislation to create a retiree visa for various people who would like to spend some of their retirement years in the United States. Let me give you an example of how this will work by using August and Gerda Welz as an example.

August and Gerda Welz have spend more than \$380,000 in the United States since taking up a residence in Palm Coast, FL, 3 years ago. Native Germans, the Welzs saw Florida as an ideal place to spend their retirement years, with its pleasant climate and sound economy. They own a home, pay taxes, and volunteer in the community.

What they did not realize, however, was how many problems they would encounter in meandering through the United States' immigration laws.

To encourage more business and tourist travel to the United States, the Immigration and Naturalization Service established the Visa Waiver Pilot Program [VWPP], which has benefited many citizens from eligible countries. Narrow in scope, however, it only pertains to those who come to the United States for 90 days or less. Couples such as the Welzs represent the growing number of foreign travelers who wish to stay for an extended period of time or even retire in the United States. Unfortunately, they must still jump through an unreasonable number of hoops.

Having to navigate through such a complex set of rules and regulations is an unnecessary disincentive to foreign tourists looking to retire in the United States. My legislation would help remedy this.

The proposed visa would be available to citizens from those countries participating in the VWPP, as well as Canada. This diverse group includes countries such as Japan, Spain, and Germany. Applicants would have to be at least 55 years of age, own a residence in the United States, maintain health coverage, and receive income at least twice the Federal poverty level. The applicant would also be required to maintain a residence in his or her country of citizenship.

Perhaps the most attractive feature is that the visa would be valid for up to 4 years, alleviating the burdensome expense of frequent travel. It would be renewable as long as the application was filed from the retiree's country of citizenship.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to clarify that the proposed visa would only be available to non-immigrants, and would not provide work authorization or eligibility for any Federal means-tested programs. In its simplest terms, the visa would serve as a much needed mechanism in which foreign retirees would have the opportunity to comfortably reside in the United States.

It goes without saying that ensuring proper immigration procedures is critical to our Nation's well-being. Still, there is absolutely no